



FEBRUARY 2025

Newsletter



From Temporary to Transformational: A New Era of Worship

They say good things come to those who wait, and for these three churches, the wait has been well worth it. After years of setting up and tearing down, searching for spaces that could accommodate their growing ministries, and navigating the challenges of temporary locations, LifeChurch Southfield (MI), Iglesia Cristiana Shalom Elohim (CA), and Rock Harbor Church (FL) have each taken a bold step into the future—establishing their first permanent worship facilities.

These milestones mark more than just a change in location; they represent new opportunities to serve, grow, and transform communities. Whether it was securing a long-awaited sanctuary, expanding to meet the needs of a thriving congregation, or stepping into ownership during a global pandemic, each church's journey to finding a home was unique. But one common thread remains: the unwavering commitment to ministry and the faithfulness of God in providing the right space at the right time.

In this edition, we celebrate their stories—stories of perseverance, divine provision, and the power of having a place to call home. As we look back on their journeys and ahead to what's next, we are reminded that a building is more than just walls and a roof; it is a tool for ministry, a foundation for growth, and a beacon of hope for the future.

YOU INVEST. WE LEND. **MINISTRY GROWS.**



PETER HEDSTROM
PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COVENANT PROPERTIES

Christianity is shrinking in North America! What is the Covenant doing to counter this trend?

Recently, I returned from the Covenant's MidWinter Conference in Denver, and it was an inspiring week for our team at NCP to connect with many of our Covenant pastors and leaders. We had lots of meaningful conversations about growing and expanding ministry programs to better reach their neighbors and local communities. Thank you for those wonderful meetings and opportunities to talk.

Our team had the opportunity to share at the church planter's luncheon about how NCP may partner with church planters as they assess effective and unique ways to be a beacon of light in their communities. There were several conversations about potential real estate and church facility projects as well as the importance of the space reflecting who they would like to be and serve in the community.

We are grateful for all our Covenant pastors and church leaders who are working diligently to share the Good News and to reach a growing unchurched population. A recent report from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity indicated that while there are many positive statistics for the growth of Christianity globally, Christianity is shrinking in North America. Additionally, more than half of non-Christians have no relationship with a Christian.

Amid these realities, it is encouraging and a true privilege for our team to partner with the three churches highlighted in this newsletter. Each of these churches is dedicated to ministry and committed to serving the unique needs of their local community. While each church's journey varies, they are all growing both in size and programs. These three churches are striving to use their facilities as a connecting point for their congregation and those searching for community.

NCP appreciates the courage and passion for the Kingdom that is demonstrated daily by everyone involved in the Covenant movement. Collectively and through an intentional ministry focus where church planting is a key component for renewal and growth, we can together invest in people and build for the future. Thank you for allowing NCP to serve the Covenant and to align our mission with your ministry.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Financial and Real Estate Training

- March 29, 2025: Pacific Northwest Conference
Kent Covenant Church, Kent, Washington
- April 4, 2025: Alaska Conference Annual Meeting
- October 4, 2025: Midwest Conference, Denver Area

Real Estate Training

- April 4, 2025: Pacific Southwest Conference Annual Meeting
- May 2, 2025: Great Lakes Conference Annual Meeting



Iglesia Cristiana Shalom Elohim

ROHNERT PARK, CALIFORNIA



Iglesia Cristiana Shalom Elohim is a Spanish-speaking, multiethnic church located in Rohnert Park, California. Their membership represents fifteen different nationalities. Each Sunday, 35 - 45 volunteers come together to make sure the 350 worshippers are taken care of.

Their church was instrumental in serving people during the 2017 Tubbs fire in Santa Rosa and is now an Emergency Operation Center with Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD). They are the supervising lead for district 2, designated by Sonoma county to get the word out and coordinate efforts with other faith based organizations. They consider it a blessing to have a seat at the table during emergencies and to provide valuable resources and safe harbor to those in need.

The church worked with Rollie Persson of National Covenant Properties (NCP) to find their building in 2019, then again in 2022 to purchase a vacant lot across the street to expand their parking as the church continued to grow. Iglesia Cristiana Shalom Elohim is a community that includes skilled tradespeople who have donated their expertise, time, and profits to renovate the building into a space that allows them to worship together and do greater ministry than their previous rental space. They added a picnic area outside and now Sunday worship is an all day affair.

Their building provides a space for family members of all ages to be ministered to simultaneously. They use the building seven days a week for various community ministries, including a bible institute, women's and men's groups, youth groups, support groups, food pantry, and more. They serve 175 families a month through their food pantry and provide over 500 backpacks to children in need each school year.

The church uses the downstairs portion of the building and rents out the upstairs for supplemental income. Currently they have two renters that have connections to the congregations. Pastor Edwin Guzman said they view NCP as a godsend. Rollie Persson, vice president of real estate services for NCP, and Will Davidson, then chair of the PSWC, listened to them and believed in them from the beginning. "We would not be where we are and many lives would not have been saved were it not for their faith in us," said Guzman. Since they purchased their building in 2019, they have tripled in size and countless people and come to know Jesus as their Savior.

Recently, they returned from a mission trip to Guatemala where they witnessed 120 people come to faith. They are a place where lost people are found and hurting people are helped.



LifeChurch Southfield

SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

As the saying goes, "Good things come to those who wait!" It took LifeChurch Southfield almost 11 years to find a permanent facility. Started by Pastors Alan and Marica Tumpkin as a church plant from LifeChurch Canton in 2011, LifeChurch Southfield had a lot of success in ministry – but not in finding a permanent facility.



Throughout those years, LifeChurch Southfield continued to grow no matter where they landed. As a result, they were reluctant to invest in a building, feeling those resources could be better spent on ministry. Still the challenges of setting up and tearing down each Sunday, multiple moves, and limitations on expanding ministries in a temporary space led the church to feel it was not reaching its full potential. "We were growing and our ministry was bearing fruit, but often we were limited in what we could do and had no options for expanding," said Pastor Alan.

In 2021, the church found an old bank building that was available for rent and would allow them to have full control over the entire space. The building was in their target area and would give the church some permanence and flexibility which other rental facilities had not previously provided. As the church and NCP evaluated the rental terms, it became clear that it was more cost effective to purchase the building. Owning the building would also allow them to make physical changes to meet their growing ministry needs.

In late 2021, the church elected to purchase the property with the seller providing financing. The facility was a more effective tool for the church's ministry as well as providing them with studio space to support their and other local churches' production of virtual services during the pandemic. They also were able to rent space to the Great Lakes Conference, which had lost its office space when their landlord sold the property.

By the middle of 2022, it became clear that the church was growing and needed to make changes to their facility. LifeChurch Southfield approached NCP about refinancing their loan so they could be in a position to get additional financing to help them to expand and renovate their facility. In January 2023, NCP refinanced their purchase loan and in May 2023, loaned them additional funds to complete several smaller projects, including improvements to their sanctuary and repairs to their roof.

By the middle of 2024, it became clear that the facility was having a major impact on their attendance as they were maxing out their 200-seat sanctuary at both Sunday services. After consulting with an architect, they determined it was possible to expand their sanctuary and double its size. They could also create a more effective welcoming/gathering area leading into the sanctuary.

The church engaged in a capital campaign which raised pledges to cover the cost of the project, but since those pledges were going to come in over 24 months, they again turned to NCP for a bridge loan to help them complete the work on a renovated 400-seat sanctuary. On December 22, 2024, both services were packed as the church celebrated its first worship service in the new sanctuary. Pastor Alan even joked they may need to think about starting a third service.

Pastors Alan and Marcia are already planning their next renovation project. During the December 2024, opening service, Pastor Alan shared that the church is planning for an update to their children's area. At some level, NCP will be partnering with LifeChurch Southfield on this project as well. "NCP has been a great partner for LifeChurch. It is good to have a lender who understands that the goal is improving ministry, not improving the bottom line. When we are ready for the next project, we know that NCP will be standing right there next to us," Pastor Alan said.



Rock Harbor Church

MELBOURNE BEACH, FLORIDA



It is not often that a church plant buys their first facility during a global pandemic, but Rock Harbor did just that. Located in Melbourne Beach, Florida, Rock Harbor was planted by Pastor Kevin Diamond in late 2018. Melbourne Beach is on the southern end of Florida's Space Coast, and right on the Atlantic Ocean, making land for churches extremely scarce and very expensive.

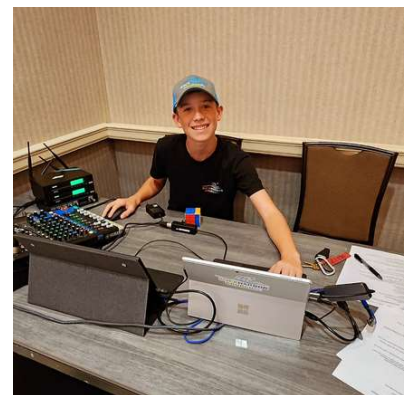
Luckily, Rock Harbor was able to rent space from a local, multi-site Lutheran church that had a campus in Melbourne Beach. Even with a less than ideal Sunday service time, Rock Harbor was able to grow from 83 in average attendance in 2019 to almost 200 by 2021. This rapid growth created some challenges for Rock Harbor as they struggled to fit their expanding ministry into the rented space.

After looking at various options in the community, Rock Harbor entered into discussions with the Lutheran church about buying the building that they were renting in. In the end, the Lutheran church agreed to sell the property to Rock Harbor and relocate its congregation to another campus.

Rock Harbor then turned to NCP Real Estate Services for help and guidance. “When we were just a two-year-old church facing the daunting challenge of purchasing the property we had been renting for \$2 million, NCP didn’t just provide a loan—they walked with us every step of the way,” said Pastor Kevin. With coaching from Rob Hall, a committed facility team at Rock Harbor, and a loan from NCP, the church was able to purchase the property in early 2023. The benefits of owning and having full control over a facility were almost immediate.

Owning their own facility gave Rock Harbor the opportunity to expand to two services, allowing them to grow to an average attendance of over 500. This growth has more than doubled their budget - but more importantly, expanded their ability to reach more people with the love of Christ. Rock Harbor likes to say that they do not have members; they have ambassadors who demonstrate the love of Christ to a hurting world. With the facility as a base camp, the ambassadors of Rock Harbor are not only serving those who come to the church, but are also reaching out and serving the community by partnering with other like-minded organizations such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Young Life.

The tag line for NCP is “You Invest, We lend, Ministry Grows.” Rock Harbor’s story, as well as the stories of Iglesia Cristiana Shalom Elohim and LifeChurch Southfield, illustrate how NCP investors enable ministry growth by making loans possible. It also shows how finding the right facility can help expand ministry and impact for the Kingdom. The partnership between NCP and Rock Harbor further demonstrates that the Covenant is better when we are in it together. “For most of our church, NCP has been the most tangible expression of the greater Covenant community, demonstrating what it means to stand together in ministry and mission. We are profoundly grateful for their partnership and faithfulness,” said Pastor Kevin.



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